RAPID TYPESETTING.

AN INVENTION THAT WILL REVOLUTIONIZE NEWSPAPER WORK.

The Important Place That the Typesetting Machine Is Destined to Make In All Big Newspapor Offices—One Writer Tries an Experiment.

It happens that I have very decided ideas about the future of mechanical typesetting. Originally a disbeliever and a scoffer, I have become a convert. The machine is with us to stay. It has come just as came the cotton gin. Any device that will reduce the cost of the production of a manufactured article 25 per cent cannot be ignored. The newspaper is a manufactured article. Typesetting by machinery does reduce the cost of its production at least 33 per cent. Therefore the machine is the life preserver of the modern newspaper.

With the perfection of the printing machine came the invention of the typewriter, and while their relation is not obvious at first there is no doubt that their interdependence can be shown and that the success of the typewriter has hastened the perfection of the typesetting machine.

We can all remember how crude were the first typewriting machines; how inaccurate their alignment and how slow their production of copy. Today no well appointed newspaper or lawyer's office is complete without them. Many successful correspondents and special writers do their own work wholly by dictation directly to the typewriter. So great is the speed of the expert operator today that he or she can readily keep pace with the average rate of speaking. The typewriter has become a great source of comfort to the copy reader and editor. Bad English is more readily detected, proper names are more accurately put in type from the printed page, and the general result is more satisfactory to both the writer and the reader of the paper.

The theory upon which the copy reading desk exists in every newspaper office is that it is for the purpose of making matter intended for publication more readable and more concise, but, above all, of purging it of libelous and indelicate matter and bad English.

It is a matter of sincere mortification to the experienced writer upon the newspaper press to feel that the average copy reader is a copy butcher. While not entirely to blame for this, because he is instructed by his superior to "read for space," the haste under which the work generally has to be performed does not militate in favor of nice distinctions in the use of words, in the turning of phrases or in the selection of subheads. Very much—ah, too often—the individuality of the writer is destroyed, and the plan upon which he or she constructed the account of a disaster, a murder or a town meeting is utterly eradicated.

I can remember to have heard in The Tribune office during the days of Horace Greeley humiliating rebukes administered to reporters upon its staff who ventured to cleverly turn a phrase or to be unduly familiar with an adjective. In those days of the blue pencil the copy readers broke hearts and slashed manuscript, never stopping to consider that they were destroying instead of creating capable newspaper reporters and correspondents.

Looking back over an experience of nearly a quarter of a century in New York, I cannot recall a single clever literary man who endured that harsh schooling for three or four years whose love of his work survived. The blue pencil, with a mere carpenter behind it, is the destroyer of style, the dissipator of ambition.

The typesetting machine already looms up as a valuable coadjutor of the working newspaper man—whether he be reporter, editor or special writer. The compactness of the typesetting machine of today; the possibility of running it with a small dynamo and a jet of gas; the fact that one man can do the work of four and can produce type in columns ready for use with nearly the same rapidity that the expert typewriter can place words in a row upon blank paper, suggest that the writer talk directly to the compositor.

Before many years I confidently expect to see the typesetting machine, with the expert compositor behind it, take a place at the right hand of every writing editor's desk in every newspaper office in this country.

The manual drudgery of composition is already relieved by the introduction of the stenographer and typewriter, but at critical hours of the night, when every minute is worth saving, there is no reason why delay should be suffered by a writer who desires to turn into copy ideas that are ready to flow from his pen upon the white paper. Why longer submit to the tyranny of the copy reader? Why shall not each "star" reporter hire his typesetting machine just as he already employs his typewriter?

There are many arguments in favor of this idea.

The writer will be able to exactly fill the space allotted to him for his article. If there be any "overset," he will know it before the article goes into the hands of the night editor. Again he will be able to retain all his peculiarities of style, and the proofreader will only revise for typographical errors. In addition the writer will be able to produce three times as much copy every night as he can possibly put in hand by the old system of writing out his ideas.

As an evidence that this system is thoroughly practical I have undertaken to compose this article directly to the machine. The crudities of expression that may be apparent are due to the fact that what I have said went into solid type. There is a famous maxim, "Littera scripta manet." Here the spoken word is cast into hard metal almost as soon as uttered, and from its silver face can be no appeal, no alteration, no retraction!

As an experiment it is interesting, and I am sure that this is what we shall all come to eventually.

In time we may be better writers, more capable of accurate and regular dictation. The saving of time in our brief and active human existence is worth so much to us all that we cannot afford to ignore its possibilities.—Julius Chambers in New York Recorder.

The Algerian Donkey.

The donkey in Algeria rarely has a saddle. He has a pad very similar to the pad on which the bespangled queens of the sawdust ring dance their short hour to delighted boys and rustics. The pad has no stirrups and is so wide as to make a seat on it extremely tiring to the uninitiated. The Arab sits astride or sidewise, and as the pad is rarely girthed, or at best by a slender rope, it is like walking a tight rope or managing a birch bark canoe to sit on it until you "catch on." Between this pad, which serves equally for loading or riding, and the saddle of the Spahi there is a vast category of sizes and styles, all, however, much too wide. A pair of stirrups is often improvised by tying two bags together, putting them across the pad, turning in one corner and thrusting the foot into the pocket thus made. The flimsy pretext for saddle or harness used all over the east would be cast on the dump by the poorest American farmer. He would not risk his bones with it.—Colonel T. A. Dodge in Harper's.

War Is Very Expensive.

War is a very expensive business. Statistics of some of the great wars of the past are as follows: The Crimean war cost $2,000,000,000 and 750,000 lives. The Italian war of 1859, $300,000,000 and 45,000 lives; the war of the rebellion cost the north $5,100,000,000 and the south $2,300,000,000, and together about 830,000 lives; the Prusso-Austrian war of 1866 cost $333,000,000 and 45,000 lives; the Russo-Turkish war, $125,000,000 and 250,000 lives, and the Franco-Prussian war $4,100,000,000 and 196,000 lives.—New York Evening Sun.

TREATMENT OF PRISONERS IN 1563.

English and Spanish Soldiers Taken In Battle Horribly Tortured.

In the summer of 1563 eight English merchantmen anchored in the roads at Gibraltar. England and France were then at war. A French brig came in after them and brought up near. At sea, if they could take her, she would have been a lawful prize. Spaniards under similar circumstances had not respected the neutrality of English harbors. The Englishmen were perhaps in doubt what to do when the officers of the holy office came off to the French ship. The sight of the black familiars drove the English wild. Three of them made a dash at the French ship, intending to sink her. The inquisitors sprang into their boat and rowed for their lives. The castle guns opened, and the harbor police put out to interfere. The French ship, however, would have been taken, when unluckily Alvarez de Bacan, with a Spanish squadron, came around into the straits. Resistance was impossible.

The eight English ships were captured and carried off to Cadiz. The English flag was trailed under De Bacan's stern. The crews, 240 men in all, were promptly condemned to the galleys. In defense they could but say that the Frenchman was an enemy, and a moderate punishment would have sufficed for a violation of the harbor rules which the Spaniards themselves so little regarded. But the inquisition was inexorable, and the men were treated with such peculiar brutality that after nine months 90 only of the 240 were alive.

Ferocity was answered by ferocity. Listen to this: The Cobhams of Cowling castle were Protestants by descent. Lord Cobham was famous in the Lollard martyrology. Thomas Cobham, one of the family, had taken to the sea, like many of his friends. While cruising in the channel he caught sight of a Spaniard on the way from Antwerp to Cadiz, with 40 prisoners on board, consigned, it might be supposed, to the inquisition.

They were of course inquisition prisoners, for other offenders would have been dealt with on the spot. Cobham chased her down into the Bay of Biscay, took her, scuttled her and rescued the captives. But that was not enough. The captain and crew he sewed up in their own mainsail and flung them overboard. They were washed ashore dead, wrapped in their extraordinary winding sheet. Cobham was called to account for this exploit, but he does not seem to have been actually punished. In a very short time he was out and away again at the old work. There were plenty with him.—Froude in Longman's Magazine.

He Merely Wondered.

The boarder on Cass avenue looked up appealingly at his landlady. There were in his face the lines of patient suffering that dumb driven cattle show when one looks at them closely, and there was about him that air of submission married men sometimes cannot quite conceal. The landlady caught his eye.

"Well, what is it?" she asked suspiciously.

He turned the chicken leg over on his plate meekly and looked at her again.

"Well," she asked, "is there anything the matter with your victuals?"

"No," he sighed wearily. "I was merely wondering."

"Wondering at what? Ain't it clean?" she asked nervously.

"Quite clean, quite clean," he said apologetically and with encouragement to her.

"Then what are you wondering at?" she insisted.

"I was merely wondering," he said, "if you intended making an angel of me."

"How do you mean? You don't think I want to poison you, do you?"

"Oh, no; but for months and months you've been feeding me on wings, wings, nothing but wings, and now that you have given me this drumstick I merely wonder if you didn't want me to join the heavenly choir as one of the musicians," and once more he sighed and looked at her appealingly.—Detroit Free Press.

How Camphor Is Made.

Camphor is the result of evaporating an essential oil found in two different trees—the Cinnamomum camphora, which grows in China and Japan, and the Dipterocarpus camphora of Sumatra and Borneo. From these two trees it is obtained in very different manners. In the Cinnamomum it exists in root and branch, stems and leaves, which are chopped small and put into earthen vessels, which are heated. These vessels are covered with hoods, and rice straw is placed in them. The camphor is volatalized and rises. It condenses on the straw, from which it is afterward cleared. In the Dipterocarpus it is found in the trunk in a solid form, and it is obtained by cutting the tree down and splitting it open. It is found in pieces from 1 to 2 feet long and about as thick as a man's arm. A moderate sized tree will yield about 10 pounds of camphor, a larger one about twice that quantity. This kind is more highly esteemed than the other, so that in Japan 200 pounds of native camphor are valued at one pound of the Bornean.—New York Telegram.

Tobacco.

I cannot help feeling a sneaking kindness for Charles Lamb, who toiled after tobacco "as some men toil after virtue." "I design," he said, "to give up smoking, but I have not yet fixed on the equivalent vice." In his letter to Wordsworth accompanying his "Farewell Ode to Tobacco," he says: "Tobacco has been my evening comfort and my morning curse for these five years. I have had it in my head to do it these two years, but tobacco stood in its own light when it gave me headaches that prevented my singing its praises." So general, however, has the custom become, in spite of every counterblast, that, with Thackeray, we need not yet despair of seeing "a bishop lolling out of the Athenæum with a cheroot in his mouth, or at any rate a pipe stuck in his shovel hat.—National Review.

In Russian Shops.

The common people of Russia as a rule speak only their own tongue. A large proportion of them cannot read the bewildering characters—Roman, Greek and composite—which form their alphabet, and to help their ignorance the shop walls are covered over with rudely painted pictures of articles for sale within. The butcher's shop has a picture of meats of all sorts and shapes; the tailor's walls are covered with paintings of coats and trousers. The pills of the apothecary and the vegetables of the green grocer are advertised by pictures upon the doors and windows of their stores.—New York Evening Sun.

In the Wrong Place.

Female Beggar—Can't you, kind sir, help a poor woman with four children and a husband who can't get out?

Mr. Kindsir—What ails your husband, my good woman? Why can't he go out?

"He is on Blackwell's Island."

"Humph! He should have gone to Sing Sing. Then he could have got out."—Texas Siftings.

Yes, She Had a Beau.

"Is any one waiting on you?" asked a polite floorwalker of a timid maiden from Port Chester in a Harlem dry goods emporium recently.

"Yes, sir," replied the awkward damsel, pointing to the door and indicating a still more bashful youth. "That's him. He's keeping company with me, but he's afraid to come in."—New York Herald.

The Savings of Years.

Dillson—There's a man who never fees a waiter, but slips a half every time into his own pocket instead. He has bought a house and lot with five years' accumulations!

Stillson (shivering)—Gad! I'll bet that house is haunted!—Club.

MECCA AS A SHRINE OF CHOLERA.

An Awful Picture of Asiatic Filth and Reckless Fanaticism.

From 70,000 to 100,000 seems to be the ordinary average number of those who visit Mecca during the festival and who are present at Mount Arafat on the 9th of Zu'l Hijjah. They come from every quarter of the compass—inland by caravan from Syria and Persia, Turkey and Afghanistan; by sea from Red sea ports; from Africa, across the whole width of which many of the weary pilgrims have walked, and from every part of the world where the standard of Islam has been raised.

With no provision for decency or comfort they camp around or crowd into lodgings in the sacred city. They make excursions, clamber up the mountains, spend hours in the blazing sun, are sickened with rotting smells arising from the thousands of animals which are sacrificed, crush and stifle in the Ka'ba, and finally, as if they had not already run sufficient risk of catching every possible complaint, they drink the water of Zem Zem.

This is the well from which Hagar is said to have drawn water for her son Ishmael, and the drinking of the water is a most holy rite. The supply, however, is not as great as could be desired for so large a crowd of pilgrims, and the manner of dealing with it at the well goes far to explain the intensity of the poison and the fearful mortality which attends any outbreak of cholera among the Meccan pilgrims.

At a given period the pilgrims stand naked in turn at the place appointed. A bucket of water is poured over each man. He drinks what he can get of it, and the rest falls back into the holy well. The water from this well has been analyzed by Dr. Frankland, F. R. S., of the Royal College of Science, London, who describes it as fearfully polluted with abominable contaminations. Imagine, then, one single member of this enormous crowd suffering from the early stage of cholera!—to be struggling, as struggle he would with his last strength, to get through the holy rite and to be allowing the choleraic discharges with which his body would be soiled to be washed back into this foul well!

What is to happen to the crowd of pilgrims who close in on the spot that he has left, and who each in turn swallow in rapt fervor the fetid draft in which these thousands have been washed? Can we wonder, then, knowing the history of the Broad street pump, that in 1866, within a few days of the ceremony, the road leading from Mecca was for 12 miles thickly strewn with dead bodies—a holocaust to be added to the account of perverted religious rites which has already so deadly a record?—Dr. Ernest Hart in Popular Science Monthly.

Excusable Ignorance.

For one to be ignorant of the proper use of a novelty is nothing to be ashamed of. If you are ignorant, you are just a trifle old fashioned—a season behind time. Frank innocence and tact will save a situation from awkwardness, and sometimes the resort to them is thought attractive. If you are uncertain of a new, strange piece of silver, wait and watch your neighbor or your hostess and act accordingly. Local customs and usages, even in this traveled age of people and products, make certain ignorance or innocence very possible. A southerner could not be blamed for not knowing which end of the stalk of asparagus to eat because it is not a vegetable of his latitude. In exchange a northerner could not understand the bur artichoke, and in being ignorant he would be above reproach.

There is a certain sign language that obtains between host and guest, and between those who sit and those who wait, and its meaning every well bred child learns in the nursery. In the wonderful ups and downs in our country the person who sits today at the finest appointed table may never have had the advantages of a nursery nor of a mother who knew what civilization supplies to the top ladder people. Such a person is in a kind of helpless ignorance, and how to enlighten him is the conundrum of many.—"Her Point of View."

A Blue Man.

A Kentuckian, who is a patient in a hospital in that state, is as blue as a new stovepipe from the top of his head to the bottom of his feet. His finger nails are blue and so is his tongue, and altogether he is the bluest man in America. The doctors say that the discoloration is caused by nitrate of silver poisoning. Asbridge for years has been subject to epileptic fits, and took great quantities of nitrate of silver in order to ward them off. This was gradually deposited in the skin, and on exposure to light turned a blackish sort of blue, just as it does on a photographer's plate. His face and hands are darker than the portions of his body protected by clothing. His eyeballs look like hard boiled eggs that have been soaked in a solution of indigo after the shells were removed. According to the medical men it will take a good many years for his cerulean epidermis to bleach out, and it may never be restored to the original tint.—San Francisco Examiner.

Italian Women Do Not Become Familiar.

An Italian lady does not allow her politeness to suggest a possibility of future intimacy. She will shake hands with an American when introduced to her for the first time. After that she considers a graceful courtesy sufficient. Should she be sick the Italian lady will visit her and express her sympathy by taking her hand and pressing it against her heart, but there is no free, caressing intimacy about it. "Never touch the person—it is sacred," is a proverb among the Italians, however warm hearted and sociable they may seem.—F. H. Stauffer in Kate Field's Washington.

Pay More and Get Less.

It is one of the anomalies of modern hotel life that the more you pay the less you expect in return. In the huge caravansaries of the large American cities, where a man pays $75 a week for a room without board, he never thinks of asking any service of the employees without paying liberally for it. He is charged for a fire, for a light after midnight, for the use of the telephone, for sending out a message by an office boy, for taking lunch in his room, for corkage on his own wines and must tip the waiters. In a country hotel, where he pays $6 a week, with board, he can have a fire in his room when he wants it, he can trust the landlord to send letters and messages, he can smoke all over the house, he can borrow anything from a gun to a pair of trousers, he can get the landlady to mend his torn coat, he can call for breakfast at 5 o'clock in the morning and get it, and he has to tip nobody.—New York Sun.

A Pleasing Innovation.

A new custom, that has grace and beauty to confirm it, is that of putting a trailing wreath of flowers with the streamer of crape that long usage dictates should hang from the bell when there has been a death in the house. The style is lovely in relieving the horrible somber effect, but in the winter, when flowers are worth their weight in gold, it adds, often pressingly and unduly, to what are always heavy expenses and sometimes heavier than can any way well be borne.—Philadelphia Press.

The Duel In Austria and Russia.

In Austria and Russia the duel is a far more dangerous affair than in France. In the former country pistols are used at close range, or furious and prolonged struggles with swords have almost equally serious effect. Dueling in the army is rife, and among civilians it is carried on with no less bitterness of feeling. Nevertheless some men are often engaged with but slight ill effects.—London Tit-Bits.

Saying that when you knock him on the head a fish quivers as terribly as a man in extreme agony, we know nothing about the sensibility of fish.